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constitution (about which they asked many questions) was a democratic one; for, they said, the Administration always supported the chiefs against the commoners.

The villages to which commoner leaders are appointed differ from all other Bantu villages of which we have knowledge in that they consist of groups of age-mates, not groups of kinsmen; boys build with contemporaries and remain with them through life; girls join the villages of their husbands at marriage; therefore relatives, other than husband and wife and young children, do not live together. Nevertheless kinship ties are important, for property circulates within the kinship group rather than within the village, and kinsmen are believed to be mystically interdependent, in a way in which fellow villagers are not. The most prized possession of the Nyakyusa are cattle, for cattle enable a man to marry, to live in comfort, to gain prestige by feasting his friends; and cattle pass along the roads of kinship. They pass between brothers, and half-brothers, and the sons of brothers; between fathers and sons; and between affines. Kinsmen also participate in common rituals, praying to common ancestors, and seeking protection from mystical dangers which are thought to travel, like cattle, along the roads of kinship. Ever fearful lest a quarrel among them should bring misfortune on all, they strive to live in harmony.

The range of kinship recognized varies somewhat with the status of the family concerned and the proximity and personalities of its members, but, generally speaking, economic and religious co-operation link the descendants of a common grandfather, and marriage between the descendants of a common great-grandfather is excluded. A legal marriage is effected by the passage of cattle from the groom's group to the bride's, and it is this passage which is said to create kinship (*ubukama*), with the consequent mystical interdependence, between a man and his wife, and between the one partner in a marriage and the close kinsmen of the other. Polygyny is the ideal of every pagan, and it is made possible by the ten years' difference in the average marriage age of men and women. Girls are betrothed very young and finally join their husbands at puberty, while few pagan men marry under twenty-five. Inherited cattle are controlled by the older generation and polygyny is the prerogative of age. For property passes not directly from father to son, but from brother to brother,

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rough each group of full brothers, until, when the last full rother is dead, and the son of the eldest is an adult, the family ock comes to him. Thus few men under forty (other than chiefs) ave more than one wife. Of 3,400 tax-payers (presumed to be 8 years and over) in Selya, 34 per cent were bachelors, 37 per ent monogamists, and 29 per cent polygynists. Plural marriages reed wealth, for the polygynist is likely to command the labour f many sons as well as several wives, and in due course he ex-ects to receive the marriage cattle of many daughters.

Social status turns primarily on age, sex, and the control and istribution of wealth. As we have seen, the position of a chief is ereditary, but kinship with a chief does not carry office, nor are e kinsmen of chiefs conspicuously wealthy. Every man in turn opes to control the property attaching to the house into which e was born, and all who live long enough do so. But there is a elayed right of primogeniture, for the senior son of a senior on inherits the bulk of the family stock when it passes to his eneration, and the eldest of each group of full brothers has a pecial claim to the cattle coming in from the marriages of his isters.

Seniority, whether within the ontext of the lineage, or of the ierarchy of age-villages, is something respected in itself, but ealth carries authority and prestige only in so far as it is used enerously, in hospitality: one man is great and distinguished inkiya) because he feeds people, nother of little account because e is poor or mean.

Women occupy a position very subordinate to men in Nyak-sa society. They play no part in public life, except in so far as e two great wives of a chief, and the first wife of a village head-an co-operate with their husbands in rituals; and in the rela-nship of husband and wife, as well as in that of father and ughter, a woman is expected to show obedience and respect. er deference is expressed conventionally in her crouching to eet men (*cf.* Plate IX), and in her use of the submissive *tas* 'Yes, my lord') when addressed by them. Having no great chiefs d little regard for rank, Nyakyusa men show no trace of sub-rvience in their manner to each other, but they expect a meek mpliance from all women. The only relationships with a male in hich a woman may in some measure assert herself are those hich she has with a brother, and with a brother's sons. Leader-

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a ruler.' It is relevant to add that cuttings of this tree strike easily in the soil and climate of Nyakyusa country. When a chief dies he is buried beside his trees, and gradually a thicket—a sacred grove—forms round them.

The young men spend much time feasting and dancing. Formerly not only did they raid cattle for food from neighbouring chiefdoms, but they also took cattle, milk, and bananas from their fathers' villages. And they still do the latter, for they say: 'We are now the owners of the country.' The milk and bananas are often sent by the old chief, but 'if the chief is stingy, they teach him a lesson by going and *taking* bananas, saying: "We are important people." ' Great emphasis is laid on this right of the young men to take food: one group, the mates of the first heir of a senior chief, boasted to us: 'We came out with grandeur, we ate many men's cattle.'

After a month or two the members of each new village move off to build on a site of their own, and the wives of those who are married join them. Wives do not come to the first temporary shelters. The senior of the new villages remains on the site of the temporary shelters where fire was made, the ritual trees planted, and the hearth-stones of the senior headman established with magic. Gradually each member builds himself a permanent hut.

The old men move aside to make room for their sons. If land is short they may move on to the site on which a boys' village formerly was, or there may be other land available. Whatever the position, adequate land must be provided for the young men's villages. And, we were told, 'We old men are glad to move, we are glad our sons are so many and we leave the land to them.' Or again: 'The old men move because new fire has come; the young men have made themselves into new people, hence they cannot build on their old sites but on new ones. Perhaps the old men will succeed them, for they may build in the boys' village where their sons were, or if there is space they go elsewhere. But the old men rejoice greatly, for their sons have "come out".' Nevertheless there are sometimes disputes between villages of different generations regarding a particular site (*vide* Document, p. 188).

A few months after the 'coming out' each of the two young chiefs marries two wives. A young chief may be married already, but the two whom he now takes rank as his great wives (*abeke*

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abakulumba) and their eldest sons are his two heirs in the chieftainship. Young girls, daughters of neighbouring chiefs, are carried off with a show of force from their fathers' homes, by the young chief's men, who themselves later contribute to the herd of cows sent to regularize the position. The two great wives are thus married not solely with the cows of their husband, but also with those of the men whose sons their sons will one day rule. The duty of arranging the match lies with the village headmen of the old chief, and it is said that they are often guided in their choice by dreams.

The girls who are carried off are just about to reach puberty, and they stay at the house of one of the men of the old chief until their periods begin. When both have reached puberty they are initiated, not at their fathers' houses, as are ordinary girls, but in the country of their husband, and both together. At their initiation the old men and women of the country (contemporaries of the old retiring chief) play the part normally played by a girl's parents and their neighbours, while the young chief and his men take the usual part of a husband and his friends. And then, after the ceremonies are over, the two girls are given to the young chief as his wives. Houses are built for them separately, i.e. in the senior age-village of the new chiefdom for the first wife, in the next senior village for the second wife; and in this separation of dwelling place is already apparent the future division of the chiefdom between their sons.

Within the chiefdom, and among the wives and children of the chief two 'sides' (*imibafu*) are recognized. Usually, in each country there are, at its beginning, at least two age-villages and half the wives of the chief on either side. This distinction of two sides is important in succession, a son from each side eventually inheriting half the country.

From the time of the 'coming out' of the two young chiefs till the day of their own father's death there exists between him and them a delicate balance of prestige and power. Each of the three, traditionally, has judicial authority in his own age-villages, but appeals in difficult cases may be taken from either of the young chiefs and their village headmen to the old chief and his village headmen, while the religious duties of chieftainship are exercised entirely by the old chief. But in the old days it was the young chief who fought and led men. 'Young chiefs used to lead their

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time, and providing meat feasts at funerals and at the initiation and marriage of daughters.

As it is proper for men to eat with their equals it is improper for them to eat with their juniors, or with women. In the past fathers and sons never ate or drank together. Nowadays they sometimes do so, even though conservative pagans, especially if the fathers and sons have been working together. Three reasons are adduced for the change: first, the example of Europeans and Swahili; secondly, the fact that the country is at peace and it is safe for all the men to drink together, whereas formerly, when there was constant danger of attack, the young men were forbidden to drink at all; and thirdly the fact that young men earn money and buy beer for themselves which they may invite a 'father' to share (*vide* Document p. 194). When the Nyakyusa drink beer they replenish the pot repeatedly with boiling water, and men expect to have the water boiled for them by a woman. As Mwambuputa explained, 'Sometimes my son brings his pot (of beer) to my place and calls his friends saying: "We will take the pot to mother's house and she will pour in water for us." Then they come to my place, and they invite me to drink, and I accept, and we drink together. How can I grudge my son beer when I have some? Did he and his friends not entertain me?' The change turns on the fact that a young man can earn money and buy beer for himself while yet unmarried. Formerly no unmarried man commanded millet for brewing. Now, when he is drinking in his father's homestead he cannot but invite his father to join him.

Women commonly eat alone with their young children and unmarried daughters. Sometimes co-wives who are good friends eat together, but they have no obligation to do so, and in a big homestead perhaps only two wives will eat together and each of the others eat alone. More usually a woman sends a dish of food to each co-wife to eat in her own hut. For a woman to eat food with a man is considered quite impossible. In those families in which men no longer ate with neighbours one or two ate with their young sons, but we heard of none who ate with their wives. The example of Europeans did not influence them to this extent.

It is admitted that women also enjoy company and profit from it, and it is considered good that they should get on with their fellows, but there is no suggestion that it is a woman's duty to

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621 that adolescent sons are not permitted to visit their homes after
834 dark, and when they come by day for their meals they are
606 often required to eat in the open court-yard and not 'hide in the bananas or huts' lest they make love to their fathers' wives. They do not sit about in the men's village. Thus, although the villages of fathers and sons adjoin until the sons 'come out', the young men are physically separated from their young 'mothers'.

The feeling that sons should not be cognizant of the sex activities of parents, and that father-in-law and daughter-in-law should avoid one another is not, of course, peculiar to the Nyakyusa; all we seek to show is that the extreme elaboration of these avoidances among the Nyakyusa is dependent upon the existence of age-villages. Whereas a Pondo daughter-in-law must never [171] walk across the courtyard of the kinship village in which she lives, or approach the cattle byre or the men's side of her mother-in-law's hut, lest she come too near her father-in-law, yet, living in the same village, she necessarily sees him daily; the Nyakyusa daughter-in-law, living in a separate village, need not (and should not) set eyes on her father-in-law after her marriage. Where the territorial segregation of fathers and sons is blurred (as at Rungwe) there father- daughter-in-law avoidance is less strictly observed. The Nyakyusa regard this extreme form of avoidance as a peculiarity of their culture which has been imparted by them to the small groups (such as Ndali, Penja, and Nyika) whom they are assimilating.

Father- and daughter-in-law incest is clearly a potential danger in a society in which cattle are controlled by middle-aged and elderly men, who frequently have to choose between taking another wife themselves and giving cattle for a son's marriage, and who are accustomed to marrying young girls of an age suitable to be wives to their sons. But we cannot show that the danger is *greater* among the Nyakyusa than it is among other patrilineal cattle people such as the Pondo, Zulu, or Swazi, who do not find it necessary to segregate fathers- and daughters-in-law in different villages.

On the other hand the danger (common to all polygynous societies) of sons seducing their fathers' wives is exaggerated among the Nyakyusa by the absence of circumcision, the late 595 marriage age of men, the very early betrothal and marriage of 582 girls, the high degree of polygyny, and the practice of sons

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inheriting their stepmothers. Where circumcision is practised a grown woman scorns sex relations with an uncircumcised boy, therefore uncircumcised youths are not potential lovers of their fathers' junior wives; but with the Nyakyusa there is no ceremony to mark the sexual maturity of a male, and adolescent youths are acceptable to young married women of their own age. And not only does the wide difference in the age of men and girls at first marriage allow of a high degree of polygyny, but the very early betrothal of girls (over whom their future husbands have exclusive sexual rights except during the initiation ritual) means that there are very few girls available to the unmarried men. The institution of girls' huts (*isaka*) has disappeared among the Nyakyusa owing to the lack of nubile girls who are not already betrothed, and the period of seclusion at initiation (when betrothed girls are available to men other than their husbands) is short. The contrast with Nguni society, in which girls do not marry until sixteen to twenty-two, and have several years of great sex freedom before marriage[1] is marked. We suggest that it is because unmarried girls are so scarce and lusty bachelors so many, that the seduction of the wives of polygynists is frequent, and homosexual practices are general.[2] Nyakyusa insist that formerly seduction was rare,[3] and possibly the impulse towards it was indeed less strong when girls married rather later and *isaka* existed (*vide supra*, p. 87).

Lastly, the Nyakyusa permit the inheritance of a father's widows by his sons, a practice regarded as improper by certain other peoples (e.g. the Pondo[4]) who practise the levirate. A son is required to treat all his father's wives as 'mothers' while his father and father's full brothers are alive, and intercourse with a father's wife is treated as a heinous offence necessitating special purification; but after the death of the father and his full brothers these same women become wives of their former 'sons'—with the limitation that a man cannot inherit his own mother or her kins-

[1] Shaxton, *op. cit.*, pp. 180-6; M. Kohler, *Marriage Customs in Southern Natal*, pp. 10-44; H. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, pp. 135-6.

[2] H. H. Johnston, *British Central Africa*, p. 408 (footnote), hints that similar practices exist among the Nyasaland Tonga and elsewhere before adolescence only. The Nyakyusa certainly continue after puberty.

[3] MacKenzie, *op. cit.*, p. 63, states that the acknowledged child of an adulterous union was equally put to death.

[4] Shaxton, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

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the Kikuyu)[1] that the equalitarian emphasis is related to the emphasis on age-organization. As we have seen, hereditary office exists among the Nyakyusa but the power of chief and hereditary priest is limited at every point by the power of the leaders of age-sets who are chosen each generation from among commoners. That democratic (*i.e.* non-hereditary) leadership is not a necessary concomitant of a developed age-organization is, however, proved by the fact that among the Zulu, Swazi, Pedi, and Tswana, whose military organization was based on age-regiments, rank is stressed, and the leaders of age-sets are always sons or kinsmen of the chief.

It is possible, however, that the low status of Nyakyusa women relative to men is partly dependent on the age-village organization. It is most obviously related to the high degree of polygyny, and the fact that the position of the various wives is not clearly determined by date of marriage, birth, or allocation of property. For a commoner the first wife betrothed is his great wife, who takes precedence in ritual, but there is no ranking of houses and allocation of the bulk of property to different houses as among the Nguni, nor the same strong pressure on a husband to visit each wife in rotation. Instead there is acute competition between a man's various wives for the position of favourite, with a disportionate share of milk and meat and of her husband's attention. We do not suggest that there is no competition among the wives of a Pondo or Zulu polygynist, but we argue that competitive tendencies have freer play among the Nyakyusa,[2] and that this competition depresses the status of women in relation to men.

Like the kinship organization, the age-village organization favours men. As we have seen, a main end of age-villages, in the Nyakyusa view, is to allow men the enjoyment of congenial company, that is the company of friends and equals. A village consists of a group of male contemporaries and their dependants; ideally, the men live together all their lives and form a close-knit group of equals, between whom mutual loyalty, hospitality, and affability is fostered from childhood. Those who move tend to go to villages in which they already have close friends. The women,

[1] J. Kenyatta, *op. cit.*, pp. 188-9.

[2] Unfair division of milk between wives is said by some Nyakyusa to anger the ancestors who cause the cows to give blood in place of milk; nevertheless unequal allocation of milk is a much commoner cause of complaint than it is among the Pondo.

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621 561 562 on the other hand, come from many villages, and they move from village to village more than men, because most women are inherited at least once in their lives. Nor do the women form an age-set, for men inherit wives as old, or older than themselves, and they continue to marry young brides until they themselves are elderly. A village thus contains women of all ages, the older ones often being quite late-comers to it. There is neither the unity of a kinship group, with leadership of mother or grandmother, as among a matrilineal people like the Bemba, nor the leadership of the mother-in-law as among the patrilineal Nguni and Sotho peoples. It is true that among the latter peoples the leadership of women devolves on a man's senior wife when his mother is dead, but the pattern has developed in a society in which daughters-in-law usually live for a long time in the same homestead as their mother-in-law, whereas among the pagan Nyakyusa a woman rarely joins her own son until she is decrepit, long after his marriage. When the Nguni or Sotho chief wife is obeyed by her co-wives it is as the successor of her mother-in-law; indeed on the latter's death she is often referred to by junior wives as 'mother'. Where women have authority in a patrilineal society it is usually as mother, or grandmother, or father's sister. But these are none with such positions in the context of the age-village; the office of headman is not hereditary so there is no mother of the heir, and the headman's own mother and sisters normally live elsewhere.

562 63 595 Such solidarity and leadership as exist among women in pagan Nyakyusa society are within the group of women of the same lineage who live together. Great emphasis is laid on the propriety of a wife bringing a younger sister, or brother's daughter, as a junior wife for her husband (*ukusabula*): this is felt to be a compliment to the husband and a comfort to the wife, proof that the marriage has been a success. Co-wives who are of the same lineage are very closely identified, their children being treated almost as full siblings, and they themselves co-operating in everything.

562 795 One of the marked changes in contemporary Nyakyusa society is the development of leadership among women in the Christian congregations.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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misfortune and the rituals are distinct. In theory, when the shades are angry the essential offering is that made in the sacred banana grove or on the hearth; it is eaten by the grandsons of the most recently dead, and whether neighbours partake or not depends upon the generosity of the officiant; whereas when neighbours are angry there is no offering in the grove or at the hearth, the neighbours are feasted, admit anger and express forgiveness.

However, neighbours are slow to admit responsibility (for to curse someone comes close to witchcraft) and in some cases there is both a formal feast for the neighbours and a prayer to the shades, and it is left uncertain where final responsibility rests. The following texts illustrate this:

MWAIKAMBO: It is the custom among us Nyakyusa to marry many wives, mature ones and young ones, so if a man has sons at his home it sometimes happens that one of them makes love to one of his father's wives. Perhaps they commit adultery in secret, perhaps he runs off with her to a distant chiefdom. Then the father breaks off relations with him.

The son, wherever he is, learns that he has been cursed by his father and his body becomes like goose flesh. If the son is wise he gathers his property and returns to his father. He takes a friend with him and goes into the house of one of his father's neighbours. His friend and his father's neighbour speak together. 'I have come to return unto my father because I have done wrong.' He tells the neighbour what they have brought to offer the father—usually a cow and a bull. Then that neighbour seeks three comrades or perhaps four or five, and they go to pacify their irate fellow, saying: 'Our child has returned. He knows that he has done wrong towards you, but we have received him because he has confessed humbly and begged forgiveness.' His father refuses furiously and almost spears himself in his passion. His fellows pacify him for the whole day, or perhaps two or three days, then at last he agrees. Then the young man and his fellows bring the cow and the bull. The father also calls together many of his fellows and he seeks beer and cooks food. They gather together at the father's homestead and the father says: 'My son has come and admitted that he has done wrong, asking that I forgive him and saying: "I did not know what I was doing, these are the cattle which I have brought", and the others agree. Then they kill the bull. They roast some meat. The father carries one side of it, the son the other and the village headman cuts it in the middle, and the father and son each eat their piece. This is the blessing (*ulungu*), meaning that there is kinship between them now. They eat together. Then all the people eat. Also with the beer it is like this. The village headman picks a straw and puts it in the beer, hands it to the father who drinks, and then to the son. Then other people drink, and they

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngoma FN17
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find it. There are many cases like that. My friends in the age-village will go to a diviner who will declare that the shades are angry because I do not care for my father.' If a daughter makes a runaway marriage her father is angry and it is believed that either she may not conceive or her baby may be ailing until the marriage-cattle and bull of puberty have been given by her husband and accepted by her father.

The respect and obedience due to a father is due to his heir, and in certain circumstances to his sister also; while on his part the heir has the same obligations to his juniors as the deceased had. Filomba cited the example, already quoted, of a man quarrelling with his dead father's sister over the distribution of the marriage-cattle for his own sister, and the girl failing to conceive because of the anger of her father's sister. If a son, whose parents are dead, neglects to provide his sister with the customary gifts of food when she returns to her husband after a visit to her 'father', he may become impotent: 'Those below are angry and when he has begotten twins he will have trouble at the ritual.' Or the girl may fall ill. 'She thinks: "Who is my father? This is my father, but he does not care for me."' The mystical power of a senior relative is linked directly with his obligation to give gifts:

> My father's elder half-brother has power over me only if he has given marriage-cattle for my father or nurtured him. If he has given him cattle to marry a wife then he has power over him. . . . My superior (*mkulu gwanga*) is he who gives me everything.

Favouritism in a polygynous family, shown in the unfair division of milk or meat or fish by the husband between his wives, is thought to anger the shades, which cause his cows to kloof from the udder when milked, or prevent fish entering his traps, and so do the bad temper and insulting language of a quarrelsome wife. Mwakwelebeja explained that:

> If a woman is bad-tempered when she is making beer the beer goes sour. If my wife and I quarrel my shades are angry and the beer is spoiled. I say to my wife: 'You have spoiled the beer because you do not listen to what I say.'

Neglect of his words by the heir is a wrong-doing frequently mentioned.

> It is said that if I neglect my brother's children he and my father will be very angry, they will not come to meet me when I die, as the

3: Mackenzie M-S (ca. 1925) 1925
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he takes such children away, leaving a cow as payment to his late wife for bringing them up. The frantic appeals of the mother, when her child is being taken away from her, make a most distressing scene. I have been implored by mothers, kneeling at my feet, or rolling on the ground in agony, to intercede for them; but native and British law here coincide, and, apart from an appeal to the husband to forego his rights, nothing can be done. And any interference is inadvisable for the child's own sake, for there is reason to suspect that fathers deprived of what they consider their rights, take measures quietly to put the children to death. In the past the acknowledged child of adultery was openly put to death; to-day the husband may claim it if it is a girl, for a girl is "cattle"; but a boy he, in most cases, entirely ignores.

There is formally no limit to the number of wives a man may have, except the limit of his ability to part with cattle. But while polygamy was always lawful, it was not always expedient: warriors were often monogamous in practice until they reached an age when but little fighting was likely to be expected of them. And there were always men who never had more than one wife, two being a very common number for others. While there is a sentiment among some women in favour of monogamy, it is a very slow growth. There are women who will not marry Christians, because the wife of a Christian, being alone, has to do all the work, whereas in the other case, many wives make light work for each.

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

595 There are a few heathen women who do not wish their husbands to take other wives, but many who urge them to do so. Another wife is like a servant in the house, and the position of the principal wife (who is not necessarily the first) is improved when her husband adds to the number of her more or less obedient juniors. Formally they are her sisters; in reality they are her servants, and must always answer her demands with the polite response "ee." The husband also gains in importance as he acqtires one wife after another. When the children are grown up, they are dispersed to various villages, and the father is always "feared" in such places, because he has sons or daughters who will see to it that he is properly honoured when he pays them a visit.

553 585 Husband and wife take new names at marriage; but they are for private use only, the old names being used by their friends. The new names, which are given in the presence of witnesses, indicate that the old life is past, and that new duties and privileges now bind the couple to each other.

593 422 The position of the wife is guarded in many ways. Her father and brothers are always ready to take up her quarrel, even to the extent of fighting her husband if need be. She owns property, but she retains it [586] only so long as she is a wife: divorce separates her from husband and children, and also from all the household goods of which she is otherwise mistress. The husband hoes the garden, but the produce belongs to the wife; he may not take anything without her consent, even to feed his friends. If one wife

3: Mackenzie M-S (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

576 the road, and all spears must be lowered from the "ready" position, as must axes or other weapons. It is *mwiko* to attend to one's personal comfort in a public place.

593 784 The prohibitions connected with women are very numerous, and only a selection is given. A pregnant woman may not go near food in any condition, growing, being threshed, or being cooked; nor may she go near beer that is being prepared. If she goes out of the house, she must not turn back in the doorway; the ancestors are there; she must go right out, and if she needs to go in again, she must do it from a pace or so from the door. The penalty is the death of the child she is carrying. An interesting prohibition is that against going behind anyone, and it applies specially though not exclusively to women. The incised medicine of the person behind whom she passes loses its virtue; but the evil may be averted by the person turning round to face her. A woman must not sweep rubbish out of the house; she must lift it out; to sweep it out is to scatter her husband's wealth.

595 The younger wife must not begin sewing or plaiting until the elder has begun; she must not sleep at night nearer the fire than the elder; she must carry loads for the elder wife, and be generally in a subordinate position. There is no reluctance on the part of the first wife to see her husband taking others; the more he has the greater is her position. A singular prohibition is that which forbids a man to take his widowed mother home to care for her; he must care

3: Mackenzie M-S (ca. 1925) 1925
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for her where she is, or at any rate at a distance from his own house. 575

Twins are among the greatest of misfortunes; and along with twins are counted children born feet first. This subject is dealt with separately, and it needs only to be noted that parents are segregated, must not speak even to each other except in whispers, must not drink milk, lest the cow should dry up, or give only water. The mother must not pass behind anyone without asking for permission, which is given by clapping hands; nor may she pass her own father without a ceremony in which she throws dust over his head. This goes on until another child is born, or until about five years have elapsed. 575 784

It is *mwiko* for a dog to drink the milk of a cow that has recently calved; the cow will dry up. The same result will follow if strangers go into the house while cows are being milked. It is forbidden to common people to eat new season's food until chiefs and village headmen and twins have eaten first; and even they eat only when the first fruits have been mixed with medicine by the doctor. The first fish of the season must not be taken to the village. It is eaten at the river by the boys. It belongs to the spirits. To make a sucking noise with the lips is *mwiko*, being a token of impudence; it may also lead to accusation of witchcraft. Never steal from a blacksmith; the scraps of iron you steal will produce a noise in your throat like the noise of his bellows, and presently you will die. 784

For a man to see his daughter-in-law, no matter 606

4: Tew S-4 (no date) 1950 FW17 Ngumbo FW17
Ngakyusa

602 important relationships of kinship and affinity. Marriage cattle are not kept by the bride's father, but are distributed by him among her brothers for their marriages, and among his own brothers and half-brothers, who in turn give him cattle when their own daughters marry.

• 96 Half-brothers do not generally exchange cattle, but unless they do so there are no strong bonds of kinship between them. A polygynist usually counts the relationship of 'milking each other's cows', between his senior son and the oldest of each group of full-brothers by his other wives. He gives some of the marriage cows received for a daughter to one of her half-brothers, the latter being placed under an obligation to return the cows to the girl's oldest full brother some day from the marriage cattle of a sister or daughter of his own. The exchange may begin usually continues as sisters and daughters marry, and only lapses in the third generation, unless the principals quarrel and take legal action for 'separation'. Then a balance is drawn up of the cows exchanged from the beginning of the relationship, and the kinship is broken. The two then 'separated' have no mutual obligations and do not attend each other's funerals.

603 918 Half-brothers may be linked by blood if their mothers are close kin; they may also be linked by cattle exchanges. The laws of inheritance make the full brothers of a man his true heirs, then his half-brothers linked by blood, then those linked by cattle have precedence over other half-brothers.[1]

604 The bond between a man and his mother's brother is expressed in terms of the passage of cattle. As the mother's brother married with the mother's cattle, her eldest son has the right to make free with his property in his lifetime, the right to receive one cow to set up a herd of his own, and a residuary right of inheritance; if the mother's brother dies without heir, her son can claim the particular cattle obtained with and the particular progeny of the cattle given for his own mother.

606 There is a strict custom of father and daughter-in-law avoidance. A woman may never speak to, approach, or look at her husband's father, on pain of death through the witchcraft of malignant neighbours. The prohibition is extended from her own father-in-law to all his classificatory brothers, and in the basis of the age-village system.[2] A man must also avoid his mother-in-law, but this prohibition is relaxed after the birth of a child.[3] The affinal relationship is also expressed by the obligation of a man to bring a cow to the funeral of his wife's father or brother, and to give one at the death of his own son-in-law. The former may count as part of his marriage payments in case of a claim for refund.[4]

601 The main kinship terms are as follows:

Ndamo — brother-in-law or sister-in-law; used by a man for all husbands of his 'sisters', all 'brothers' of his wives, and for the son of his wife's brother, since he has a right to marry that man's sister; by a woman for all wives of her 'brothers' and all 'sisters' of her husband.

Mkagho — parent-in-law or child-in-law; used for the husband of a daughter, or for the parents of a wife or husband (a daughter-in-law is called by the special name of *Mkamasumi*). The wife of the wife's brother is called *Mkagho*, as she is the mother of a potential wife, and of a brother-in-law.

[1] Wilson, A. Gish & Afia; A. Mwaka & A.
[2] Kisi, A. Mwaka (as also A. Mwakasole, Mwaka, Ale. A) and Ash.
[3] Kasolosolo, A. Mwaka, & Afia.
[4] Wilson, A. Mwaka

4: Tew E.A (no date) 1950 FW17 Ngonde FW17

534 live with her husband until at least three cows have been given. One of the bulls is only given if the girl is virgin at her initiation rite, and this bull is given to her mother. The laws of inheritance and the system of marriage by cattle payments ensure that cattle will be in the hands of the elder men. In polygynous families men own over forty-five.'

535 The first wife married is the chief wife, and is entitled to respect and obedience from her co-wives. Her first son is her husband's ultimate heir. A man cannot lightly divorce his first wife during the lifetime of his own father who provided the cattle with which she was married. Divorce is effected by the return of the marriage cattle. Usually the woman has a lover who will pay cows to redeem her; if she refuses to go back to her husband there is no means of compelling her to do so, though in pre-European times her father and the chief might send her back. In such a case the husband would be entitled to his original payments plus their increase.[1] Men do not demand divorce for adultery unless it is persistent.[2] Divorce is often sought for very trivial reasons.[3] If the parental uncles have helped the groom to collect his marriage cattle, the beasts are redistributed to their original donors after they have been returned to the husband.[4]

536

537 A man whose wife does not claim a inheritance on the refund of his cattle. When a 748 man dies his widows pass to his heir who takes them all as wives, if he is a brother of the dead man; if the heir is a son he takes all except his own mother and the wives who are his close kin. Inherited wives have the same land rights as others.[5]

Inheritance

928 Brothers inherit before sons, then half-brothers (Subject half-brothers before other half-brothers). When all the brothers are dead the property and wives of each pass to each one's eldest son.[6] This rule also applies to the Nyamwanga and Iwa.[7] The heir assumes the full obligations of father to his younger brothers and is responsible for their marriages; they live for him and are fed by his wives as are unmarried sons.[8] The sister's son only inherits if all near patrilineal kinsmen are dead or are infants.[9]

The above applies to commoners' inheritance only. For chiefs, succession and inheritance may follow different principles. For instance, in succession to local chiefdoms, two or more sons would divide the chiefdom. Among the Ngonde the Kyungu and the great chiefs were not chosen according to strict genealogical right, but were selected from the appropriate lineage according to their wealth, generosity, and courage. In the succession to the great chiefdoms, there was formerly a difference of procedure in the two royal lines: that of Ngolenge, where the nobles of Ngonde were over-by the Kyungu to help to select the successor, that of Ngara, the line of the female side, where the nobles of Ngonde merely announced the great consequence to discuss with them who was to succeed. Nowadays the difference between the two lines has disappeared, and the Ngolenge custom is followed by both. If the genealogical heir

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5:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1938 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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The Nyakyusa are, predominantly, a patrilineal people, for inheritance normally follows the male line. They differ, however, from the patrilineal peoples of Europe in that brothers inherit before sons. Inherited wealth is thus mainly kept in the hands of the older men, though they are under certain obligations towards their "sons" (whether own or classificatory) in their use of it. Marriage involves a transfer of anything from four to thirty head of cattle from the bridegroom to his father-in-law, and consequently the chief obligation which an older man has, both to his own sons and to the sons of any kinsman from whom he has inherited, is to provide them, in due time, with cattle for marriage. But this obligation is not an absolute one, it depends, in part, upon the due fulfilment by each "son" of his filial duties, which are, firstly, to hoe his father's fields diligently and, secondly, to maintain a respectful bearing towards him. Unmarried men have no gardens of their own, they work their fathers' land and eat the produce of it which their mothers cook.

Under modern conditions money for tax and clothes is necessary both to father and son, and very many young men visit the nearby Lupa gold fields regularly, for periods of a few months at a time, to earn it. A youth who always brings back to his parents after each spell of absence tax money and some presents is held to have done all his duty and he will be given marriage cattle just as soon and as readily as if he had spent all his time hoeing at home. And if he earns more, sufficient to purchase some of his marriage cattle for himself, still his father benefits, for the old man has then to spend fewer beasts from his own stock. But the Lupa needs food as well as labour and some unmarried men stay continuously at home and engage in the production of crops; after the family needs have been met the surplus is sold and from the proceeds the father pays his own tax and his sons' and buys clothes for them as well.

Hoeing, which is the hardest part of Nyakyusa cultivation, is normally done by men, planting; weeding, reaping and cooking by women. But some women nowadays do some hoeing too—if their husbands are away at work or if for any other reason they find it difficult to get enough ground prepared for them. Traditionally, I was told, women never used a hoe at all.

Polygyny is the rule rather than the exception among middle-aged men, and in a polygynous household, as we shall see, each wife has her own garden plots. The institution of polygyny has many other elements besides the economic, but the economic is not the least important of them: the taking of additional wives is the best capital investment which is open to an ordinary, uneducated, Nyakyusa peasant. A Nyakyusa wife is not her husband's property, she is his wife; but as family relationships are, among the Nyakyusa, the basis of economic activity, so the more wives

5:Wilson E-S (1934-1938)1938 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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and children a man has to assist him the more wealth he can produce. The man and his unmarried sons hoe, his wives and young daughters plant, weed and harvest, fetch water, cut firewood and cook the food; and in other practical activities there is equally fruitful co-operation within the household group.

When a man marries he takes his wife from her father's village to his own where he lives with a group of contemporaries. Each village is in origin an age-group, formed by the sons of some village of adult men who leave home one by one as they reach the age of ten to twelve years and build together on ground set aside for them by their fathers. It is not decent, the Nyakyusa maintain, for a boy to sleep at home after any vigorous interest in sexual activity has awakened in him; and so, for the fifteen years or more between leaving home and marriage, he sleeps with bachelor friends in a boys' village. He and a group of friends go round in turn to the houses of their respective parents for meals, and each hoes his own parents' fields, but all return to the boys' village at night.

As the members of the boys' village grow older, younger boys just leaving home begin to be refused admittance to it and so either start a fresh village of their own nearby or else join a village of their own contemporaries which has already been started. Boys' villages are thus forever living off from the villages of men. At first a boys' village covers but little ground for, as its members are unmarried, the houses are small and close together and there are no garden lands attached to it. But as the young men marry one by one the village expands, houses are built bigger and further apart and some adjacent ground is brought under cultivation, until at last it assumes the normal aspect of a village of adult men.

A village thus consists of a male age-group with wives and children attached. Wives may be of any age and there is no such formal age grouping among them as among the men. And, as time goes on, some men too may enter the village who are not exact contemporaries of its other members. When a man dies his heir, either a younger brother or a son, often comes to live in his village; sons are strangers who apply for land in a village ever, I think, refused on the ground of unsuitable age. Villages vary considerably in size but average forty to fifty households.

At first a village of boys, as we have said, is built on ground allotted to it by the village of their fathers; but a new allotment is made ceremonially at the "coming out" (ukusoka) of the young chiefs.

Every generation each chiefdom of the Nyakyusa is divided into two halves, a fact which is hard to understand until it is realized that the Nyakyusa consist of a number of immigrant groups which have, until very recently, been expanding their territory within the district and

5:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1938 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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A woman, then, owns her share of food grown and only she herself
421 and her children but also for her husband, and his guests and for gifts; she
423 has, however, every right both to entertain her own women friends to meals
● 425 and to make gifts of food to her relatives, and she does so when she chooses
without consulting her husband. Co-wives entertain one another if they
are on friendly terms and even sometimes make a habit of taking their
meals together; but this is entirely a matter of personal inclination, it is in
no way necessarily inherent in their relationship; there is no community
of property between them.

421 This sharp division of property between fellow wives is well exempli-
425 fied in the following story from a Kukwe family. I was discussing with a
young man what happened if, in a polygynous household, the crops of
one wife were a failure. He assured me that no action could possibly be
taken to compel the others to give her a share of their crops, either for
food or for seed; if they did give her a share it was kindness and good-
will alone that would prompt their doing so: "I saw it happen once,"
he continued, "in my own father's house. He had three wives and had
hoed maize plots for them and divided them up, and each had planted
her own maize. But, when it began to grow, that on one wife's plot was
very poor while that on the others' plots was abundant, and at the harvest
the one wife reaped very little maize indeed. So when the harvest was
all gathered my father asked the other two whether, as they had plenty of
maize, they would not give some of it to their fellow. At first they
refused emphatically to give her any, saying that it had just happened so:
they had reaped plenty and she had reaped little or none, but it was not
their custom to divide up their crops and she, if she had reaped plenty
and they had reaped little or none, would certainly not have given any of
her crop to them. And they asked whether she was his favourite that he
made such a suggestion. Let him, they said, spend a shilling or two on
buying food for her himself. My father entreated them but still they
refused.

"But day after day for a long time he went on entreating and persuad-
ing them, pointing out that she had children to feed and asking if they
wished her to die of hunger; he, he said, was not in any way compelling
them to hand over their food, it was entirely for them to decide whether
they would not each give her a little; if they disliked doing so, well there
was no more to be said. And at last they began to be persuaded, they
discussed it all, the two of them together, and the fact that she had children
to feed, and each gave her a portion of her own crop. And later, when
this maize had all been consumed, they gave her seed also for the next
year's planting."

I then asked if the one whose crop had failed was, in fact, his father's
favourite wife or not. "No, she was not, one of the other two was his

5:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1938 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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favourite. What they said about her being, perhaps, his favourite was just their way of putting it." 421 515

Before passing to the discussion of the disposal of surplus crops we must dwell a little on the importance of a fair division of land between the several wives of a polygynist. Not only garden plots but also the bananas growing on the homestead are divided between them. Each wife is allotted a number of banana stems and is responsible for keeping their roots clear of weeds and she is also expected to weed and sweep the adjacent portion of the open space (ulubingilo). In the sweeping her husband will often assist her, her fellow wife will not. The bunches which grow on her own banana stems are her property and not even her husband will cut them without consulting her, save in exceptional circumstances. In every polygynous household, then, a division of garden plots and bananas is made between the wives, and, as it is made by the husband, it is a most important element of their relationships with one another.

For every man with more than one wife has a favourite, and, if he allows his affection for her to express itself in an inequitable division of land, there there is trouble in store: "Each wife is the owner of a plot (ulupaka) and each harvests and weeds it and keeps the food separately. The wives help each other if friendly but each wife must have her own plot—a maize plot, a bean plot, a cassava plot, a plot of sweet-potatoes, and so on. The bananas also are divided between the wives.

"A polygynist whose he loves his gardens is always afraid to give to any one wife a bigger plot than to another. For it is thought that the wife who gets the smaller plot will whisper complaints of her husband among the people; and whispering complaints of a man brings witches to kill him. It is feared that in such a case, either the husband or else the favoured wife will be killed (by witchcraft). In consequence a man is always exceedingly careful, in dividing his garden into plots, to treat his wives fairly. But even so he will perhaps give to the wife whom he loves the plot with the best soil! And it happens sometimes that a polygynist's wife, whose given a smaller plot than her co-wives, will sulk and refuse to plant: "Why," she asks, "do you give me such a small garden plot? Did I not work for you while you were leaving?" And, if her husband then loses his temper and strikes her, she will make a case before the neighbours. And they will say to him: "Friend, you should make a just division, you will only set your wives against one another by not doing so and make them kill one another." By this they mean that if one wife is angered she will bring the witches to kill her fellow wives! [754] [817]

"And if a woman is restless with her husband and is herself considering leaving him then she will be forever going and complaining to her 586

5:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1938 F317 Ngonde F317 Nyakyusa

421 913 exception, for hospitality and for gifts are very much the same; but there, if he has *kamaga* plots and because of his own, her obligations cease. Because demanded by the chief, money for tax and for his own clothes he provides for himself by making use of his *kamaga* crops, and he may even keep some of them as a security against possible famine; and so he leaves her free to dispose of her own surplus as she pleases. If, however, he has reserved no plots for himself then the surplus of each wife's plot is jointly owned by her and her husband. Neither can rightly dispose of it, in any large quantity, without consulting the other; neither can be denied the right to dispose of it, after consultation with the other, for any urgent need.

Sometimes however a division is made by the husband between himself and his wife not of field but of crops; after the harvest he takes a portion of the crop of her plots for his own use, leaving the bulk of it to her for cooking and for her own needs. In that case, once the division is made, their respective rights are just the same as if the portion kept for himself had been grown on a *kamaga* plot.

The following words of a young Kukwe man make these points clear. I had asked him about the respective rights of husband and wife to dispose of maize and beans for cash: "Normally," he replied, "if the man has not kept any *kamaga* plot separate and the crop is in consequence their common property, he will speak to his wife and ask her to take some of the beans and sell them and buy him a cloth with the proceeds. But an inconsiderate husband may just take them without consultation. So with the woman, if she wants a cloth she tells her husband and suggests taking some beans and selling them in order to buy one; and her husband agrees that she should, because there has been no division made, the crop is their common property. And if the man is in trouble for tax money he consults his wife about selling some maize or beans and she agrees, for otherwise he would be arrested. If, however, the man has kept a *kamaga* plot separate then he takes and sells his own food and his wife hers, without consulting one another; because a division has been made."

• [515] "And supposing," I asked, "that a man has three wives, whom does he consult about selling food, if there is no *kamaga* plot?" "In that case," he replied, "if, maybe, he wants to procure tax money and has no *kamaga* plot, then he speaks to his chief wife and tells her that they must assist him or he will be arrested and she suggests that they all consult together. So he calls his wives to him and they agree to give each so much from her store of food; maybe he shows them a basket for each to fill once; and then he puts it all together and sells it and pays his tax."

"This custom of keeping a *kamaga* plot," he volunteered, "is only rarely followed nowadays in Bukukwe in the case of maize and beans, but it is quite common with cassava and with bananas."

6 Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1939 FN17 Ngonde FN17

is generally admitted that all chiefs are less affected by this fear than they used to be. The secularization of the constitution tends, in this connection, to make it more autocratic.

On the economic side it is difficult to exaggerate the change in the relative wealth of rulers and people. The change is temporarily obscured by the historical accident of the present Kyungu's personal fortune, but this, when he dies, will go to this own heir, not to his successor in the Kyungulship. The Kyungu's total official salary in 1937 was £72 a year and three of the "Sub-chiefs" varied from about £4 10s. to £12 a year. The nobles of Ngonde all received either 10s. or 15s. a year, with the exception of Mulozo who received 30s. These salaries, which are paid out of the Native Treasury, are the modern substitute for the profits of the ivory-trade, which the Kyungu shared with his subordinates, together with the regular tribute of food and the proceeds of tribal warfare and of punitive expeditions, all of which sources of income have now dried up. And these salaries do not make possible the giving of any valuable gifts to subordinates and subjects. The local rulers also receive slight financial subsidies from the Native Treasury. Each "Village Headman" is allowed to retain 3d. from the tax of every adult male subject of his own and the "Important Headmen" (great chiefs) receive in addition subsidies ranging from 5s. to 60s. a year. This custom has replaced that of the requisitioning of food; but, owing to the smallness of all the present chiefdoms and fiefs of the plain, few "Village Headmen" receive more than £1 a year from this source.[1]

It is open to commoners, on the other hand, to become as rich or richer than most of their rulers. The head clerk in the Boma in 1937 received £32 a year, and there were fifty-three other Government employees who all received £12 or over; Native Christian Ministers and Evangelists all received many times the salary of Mulozo while young men often returned from the Lupa gold-fields with savings of several pounds.

The decline of polygyny in Ngonde again reduces the relative wealth of the subordinate chiefs and nobles in comparison with their people. Women are increasingly reluctant, for various reasons, to be married by polygynists, and the old style of entertainment is changing. Few chiefs and nobles, save the present Kyungu himself, now have sufficient wives and unmarried children to be able to entertain on a large scale. In the case of ordinary chiefs and territorial nobles (the "Village Headmen" of to-day) this poverty is not in itself very significant, for with the dwindling

[1] The average receipts of the one hundred and twenty-four "Village Headmen" in the Ngonde plain were about exactly 10s. per annum in 1936. They had, that is, an average of forty tax-payers each.

7: Sanderson 45 (ca. 1920) 1923 FN17 Ngonde FN17

Mwase is very nearly a translation of the word tabu, and may be used either of things or of forbidden degrees of relationship. 601

3. The following points are noteworthy :—

(1) The wife of a "brother," whether elder or younger, virgin or not, is called by the same term (ukwi) as a wife. I am informed that sexual intercourse, though not countenanced, is not uncommon, and such cases are apt to be treated leniently should they come to (native) court. This might be regarded as evidence of former "group marriages," but it should be noted that a man's first heir is his brother, who succeeds to the wives in common with the rest of the "property." 601 602 537

The same term (ukwe) is used by a woman for the "brothers" of her husband as for the husband himself, and their wives are sukamwinshi (= "her fellow-wives"). 601

(2) The "sisters" of a wife are also called ukwi. The husband of the elder of a family has a prior right to marry her younger sisters, and a semi-right to her other "sisters"; such marriages are very common. Any man who marries a woman to whom another has a prior right becomes sungwhanisi (or kitwani) to the earlier one. (See Definitions.) Reciprocally a woman calls her "sister's" husband ukwe, even after her marriage to another. 601 595

(3) A man has the right to marry the daughter of his wife's "brother" as among the Thonga,[1] and the wife of the wife's "brother" is called ukyala (see Definitions); the son of the wife's "brother" is often called ukwe instead of mwene. There is a special term for a father's sister, which is reciprocally used by a woman for her "brother's" daughter; the term ukwi-mwinenga (= "my fellow-wife") does not appear to be used by her unless and until her husband actually marries the girl. This special term is mwenga, and it can hardly be mere coincidence that it so closely resembles the Nandi term *senget* for father's sister[2] (*se-* being a common Bantu prefix, usually honorific, and, on the other hand, the terminal *-t* merely formative). 532 601

A woman calls the son of her husband's "sister" ukwe. (See para. (6) below.)

(4) All "grand-daughters," except those by marriage, are called ukwi, but marriage has never been allowed within living memory; the husband of these "grand-daughters" are called sungwhanisi (kitwani). A "grandson" is not called ukwe but (unavailable) mwinenga (= "my company");

[1] R. E. Seligman, "The relationship systems of the Nandi, Masai and Thonga," *Man*, April, 1917, 49 (quoting Junod).

[2] Seligman, loc. cit., quoting Hollis, "The Nandi."

8: Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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593 holding of land and the economics of life in general, the rules and procedure of law, the emotional forms of ceremony, the dogma, rite, morality and symbol of religion, the forms of knowledge and opinion—all are interpenetrated by these relationships.

593 595 The word *family* is used in this paper to mean the organised group of a man, his wife or wives, and their children of any age, but not to include any other relatives. A Nyakyusa family, as we shall see, does not become extinct when the father dies; his younger full-brother or his senior son steps into his place and the group continues very much as before. In this society families are sometimes monogamous, sometimes polygynous; and, in consequence, two more relationships with which we are not familiar in our own culture are included in the Nyakyusa family: one is the relationship of co-wives and the other is that of half-siblings. Within a polygynous family the different wives and their respective children form groups to some extent distinct from one another; and the term *individual family* is here used to denote the group of a man, one wife and their children, whether that group is part of a polygynous family or forms a complete monogamous family by itself.

593 595 601 The Nyakyusa themselves have no separate word for either of these small groups: the word *ukukô* is sometimes used in the restricted sense to which we have here confined the word "family," but more usually means the whole of any single person's recognised blood kindred, living or dead, both in the male and female lines; and it is translated in this paper as *kindred, kinsfolk, or kinsmen*. They also have a word *umukowa* which includes the whole of any one person's *ukukô* together with all his recognised affines, and this is here translated *relatives*. The term *affines* is used to translate the Nyakyusa word *amako*, which is identical in meaning with it.

[585] [595] 936 Marriage is legally effected by the handing over of four to thirty cows, together with one or two bulls, by the groom to his wife's father. And this transfer of cattle is the key to the whole Nyakyusa system of blood and affinal relationship. Cattle have a very high value because of their production of milk and meat, which are the most highly prized foods, and because of their scarcity; they are in constant circulation, and by their movement from one man to another they forever create and maintain the bonds of kinship and affinity. Cattle circulate rapidly; few except chiefs have more than six cows in their herds at any one time, more often each man has only two or three, while some have no cows at all; and yet every mature man has paid out, for his own and his sons' marriages, five, ten or twenty times the number of cattle that he at

8:Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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crops are planted at different seasons of the year so that there is always some hoeing to be done.

In a polygynous family each wife has her own fields (*mabuka*), hoed by her husband and her own sons, which she plants, weeds and reaps with the help of her own daughters, and the produce of which she uses to cook for her husband, her own children and herself. The relative rights of husband and wife to dispose of produce vary with different crops, but no co-wife has any rights over a woman's food. She may, and often does, ask her co-wives to help in her fields and sends them presents of cooked food from her own fire, she may help them and receive presents in return; but they have no rights over her fields or her food, only her husband and herself. And the fields which are hoed by a bachelor son belong to his own mother, who in her turn cooks food for him to eat.

Each wife has either a hut to herself, or else a separate alcove in a large hut, and there she has her fire for cooking. She fetches her own firewood and water or sends an unmarried daughter for them.

At meals the ages and the sexes eat separately; in some polygynous families each wife sends a dish to the husband, in others the wives take it in turns to cook for him. The husband eats alone or with neighbours of his own age[1] to share his dish, the older boys and their friends[1] eat separately from the younger children, and each mother again usually eats with her own daughters, apart.

In the relationship of husband and wife the chief elements are sexual intercourse, co-operation in work, the preservation of children and factors of personal inclination, character and temperament. By men women are praised for sexual skill, cleanliness and beauty, for good cooking and hard work, for their fecundity, and for gentleness of speech and behaviour, and those with opposite qualities are criticized. Among women men are praised for sexual skill and attentiveness, for vigour in hoeing and skill in house-building, and for kindness; while sexual neglect, laziness, impotence and cruelty are disliked and may cause a woman to leave her husband for another man.

The birth of children is a most important factor in the marriage relationship, for children are greatly desired both by men and women. They are desired for themselves and also because they bring their parents wealth and prestige; a boy will one day work in the fields of his father and mother, a girl will bring in cattle from her marriage. And the possession of children brings compliments and respect both to man and woman.

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[1] Vide infra "The Age-Village".

8: Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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892 Impotence and barrenness are well known facts, and magic is much used
• 896 to cure them; but apart from their operation it is believed that such
891 conceptions directly depends upon the frequency with which a man visits
his wife. And thus the bearing of children is, for a woman, a demonstration of her husband's great affection for her. People adduce the number of children that a woman has borne to prove, in conversation, that she is her husband's favourite.

895 Polygyny is the ideal of every pagan Nyakyusa: a plurality of wives is necessary, in this society, for full sexual satisfaction, wives bring a man wealth, prestige and authority, the more wives he has the more children, he thinks, will be born to him.

853 It is believed that any contact with the sexual fluids is dangerous to a
831 young child's health, and so, after a woman has borne a child, her husband is supposed wholly to refrain from intercourse with her for about a year, until the child is old enough to play by itself and allow its mother time to wash in the mornings before touching it. Then he may begin to visit her again, but still she must not become pregnant until the child is weaned. "If she does her breasts become rotten" and the first child is harmed. As children are not weaned for two or three years, this rule involves the couple in yet another year or more either of entire abstinence or of infrequent intercourse (which also is believed to avoid conception). These taboos on intercourse after a child's birth are to some extent observed in practice, and are one of the reasons for polygyny among the Nyakyusa.

864 Another reason is the absence of hired labour. With a few minor
845 exceptions the only way a man can increase the supply of labour at his disposal is by marrying more wives. Polygyny is the mark of a wealthy man, conditioned by his control of cattle, conditioning his supply of food. And the cattle spent in marriage come back again with interest as the polygynist's daughters begin to be betrothed and married.

893 It is extremely common for a man to take as his second or third wife the sister, half-sister, or brother's daughter of his first or second wife. By doing so a man pays a great compliment to the wife whose sister, or niece, he takes and to her family; his action implies complete satisfaction with her and friendship with her family. He sends his wife home "to fetch out (her kinswoman) into the open" (ukwatulila); but she will not agree to do so unless she approves of him as a husband, and so, if she does agree, her action likewise compliments him. I know of one case in which a man wished to take his second wife's younger sister in this way,

8: Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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but his wife refused to go and fetch her on the ground that he was a bad husband. 595

The children of one man and two close kinswomen have almost the relationship of full-siblings, but not quite, and I propose to call their relationship that of *limited half-siblings (nisi mfwa)*. 573

In a polygynous family the first wife married, the *chief* wife (*nyhumbaki*), is in a privileged position; she is entitled to the respect and obedience of her co-wives and her eldest son is her husband's ultimate heir. A man cannot lightly divorce his first wife during his own father's lifetime, for while the other wives he obtains by his own efforts, with his own cattle, she is married with cattle given him by his father, who must be consulted before she is divorced and who is offended if she is sent away without good cause. 595 586

Besides the *chief* wife there is, in most polygynous households, a favourite wife (*nyhondwe*), who in fact has greater privileges. Ideally a man is supposed to be fair to all his wives and to distribute milk, land and sexual attentions equally between them, with perhaps a slight bias in favour of his chief wife. But usually one wife is her husband's favourite and is given by him an undue share of the household's milk supply, and sometimes he loans more land for her than for the others, as well. 595

Divorce is legally effected by the return of the marriage-cattle. No 586
pagan woman in this society ever desires to live single, and so when a wife leaves her husband it is always with the intention of marrying some other man. Usually she has a particular man in mind who has been making love to her and who has cows enough to redeem her, but not always. A woman may, as we have described already, run off with a lover and then, as soon as he has returned the marriage-cattle and the adultery fine to her former husband, she becomes his legal wife, and her children by him are legitimate. If she has no lover to run off with, or if her lover wishes to avoid the adultery fine, the woman goes to Court[1] (before 1925 she went to her own chief) and publicly refuses to live with her husband. She may or may not give a reason for leaving him, but if she persistently refuses to go back to him there is now no way of compelling her to do so. The judges say to her: "Well you must find the cattle," and so she stays, either with her father or in the charge of a court official, until some man comes to marry her. Then the cows are returned to her first husband and the divorce is effected. In pre-European times, I am told, such a woman was frequently compelled to return to her husband by

[1] [illegible]

8: Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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636 177 578 supra). Only one of them can receive the salary and they commonly dispute about it. Quarrels are particularly frequent over the position of senior chief, for the presidency of a Court carries with it a relatively large salary. Old senior chiefs cling to the position long after their sons have "come out" and when they die their full-brothers still dispute the position with the sons because of the salary involved. Such a situation could not have arisen before 1926, for then there was no comparable issue between them.

636 642 177 And the introduction of salaries has also had a most profound effect upon the relative status of the two young chiefs who "come out" together. When an ordinary chief, with a small salary, dies the Government recognises the first son alone as chief and pays the whole salary to him. This reduces the second son to the position of a minor chief as effectively as a defeat in war might have done in the old days. But, while the action of warfare only occasionally led to the subordination of one of the brothers, this action of the Government does so invariably, and always subordinates the younger brother. When a senior chief dies, on the other hand, the salary is usually divided: the bulk of it goes to the first son, together with the position of senior chief, while to the second son is given the salary of an ordinary chief.

354 622 As the prestige and authority of a father in his family, or of a man among his neighbours, is closely connected with his wealth on the one hand, and with his believed religious powers on the other, so also the status of a chief among his people. He has more sons, more wives, more food than other men; he is spiritually responsible for the fertility of the land, the women and the cattle of his chiefdom. But he is no autocrat, and all his public functions require for their exercise the co-operation of his great commoners.

622 315 Polygyny is, above all, the mark of a chief. Few commoners have more than five or six wives, but a chief frequently marries fifteen, thirty, fifty or even more; his wives weed and plant the fields which their unmarried sons hoe, and there is plenty of food for guests. Chiefs themselves hoe when they have time, and often they employ a poor man to hoe for them as well, rewarding him after a year or two with a cow. It is not 317 possible for one man to satisfy so many women sexually, and it is generally said that every chief's wife, save the five or six who are his favourites, has a lover. But intrigues must be carried on with care, for their discovery causes a great public scandal.

The extent of a chief's polygyny is conditioned by his control of cattle, and his income in cattle is derived mainly from inheritance and the

8:Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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marriages of his kinswomen. When his father dies his father's wives £22
and cows pass to his father's full-brother, but they come to him and his £19
brother eventually when this man dies. While, if the young chiefs have
" come out " it is common for their father's brother to hand over some,
or even the bulk of the cattle, to them before his own death. And in his
own hall of the family, among his siblings and half-siblings on that side,
a chief has far greater rights both of inheritance and of receiving marriage-
cattle, than those possessed by the senior son of a commoner. So much
is clear from my evidence, but it is not yet sufficiently detailed for an
exact statement of rules.

Before 1901 fighting between chiefdoms was common and, except £31
between brother chiefs, the usual aim of fighting was, not conquest, but £21
cows; wars were generally just cattle raids. And a substantial proportion
of the cows captured in a successful raid went to increase the herds of the
chief. This last source of income is now supplied by Government £[illegible]
salaries, which vary from 5/- to £15 a month.[1] The price of a cow is £2; £[illegible]
but many shillings are spent on clothes, bicycles and beer, as well as on
cows.

A chief, like any other rich man, maintains his prestige by hospitality, £22
he constantly entertains his more notable subjects with beer, at the £27
ceremonies of his family all his people gather in their age-villages and he
kills cattle for them to eat. Chiefs seldom nowadays kill cattle except on
ceremonial occasions, but in the old days of warfare they used also, I am
told, to entertain their subjects with meat from time to time, in order to
keep up their spirits for fighting. History is full of stories of Nyakyusa
chiefs who attracted many men to their countries, and so gained great
military strength, by the generosity and abundance of their feasts.

Every time a man or woman dies, a message must be sent to the £33
chief, and at the burial he is given the whole breast and ribs (ukubasa) of £67
one of the cows which are killed by the family of the dead person at that
time. He has the right to take food or milk from any of his subjects if he
is in need of it; but he cannot take any man's beast without later returning
another to him.

Apart from the now abandoned pursuit of cattle raiding the only £21
collective enterprises in which the members of a whole chiefdom jointly £[illegible]
participate are those of hunting and fishing; in some chiefdoms, but not

[1] Salaries above £5 a month are only paid to senior chiefs. Six minor chief gets a Government salary, say £6 per annum. The local value of money is shown (a) by the tax (5/- p.a.), (b) by the wages of unskilled labour (6/- to 8/- p.m.)

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
F317 Ngoni F317
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by immersion and were strict about not eating the flesh of animals without a cloven hoof, and avoiding beer, but made a point of not being subversive and working in their fields on Sundays—these were the things they emphasized to us. They were also pacifist and would not join the Police or King's African Rifles, since Rutherford taught that all Government was evil.

(d) 'INDEPENDENT' AFRICAN CHURCHES

There is a great cleavage between the mission Churches and the 'independent' African Churches, which also claim to be Christian, read the Gospels at their services, and recite the Apostles' creed, but whose rules of life are commonly based on the Old Testament rather than the New (*vide* p. 131). Both the 'independent' Churches operating in Ba-Nyakyusa approve polygyny; the bulk of their members are middle-aged polygynists and they have at least as many men as women among them. Nyasuro's statement on polygyny was interesting:

> When we young men went to join the mission we found that many of our fathers were attracted by it. They said to us: 'If only the Europeans would let us come in with all our wives we would come.' . . . Sometimes it would happen that the son of an old man's second wife would join the mission and become a preacher and he would preach even to his father, saying: 'You pagans do wrong, you marry many women, you must repent, your ways are evil.' Then his father would say to him: 'On the contrary, it is not I who do wrong, if I had married only one wife you would never have been born, and you young men take one wife only and then what happens? You steal other men's wives, continually, in secret, and the country is full of lawsuits about women. It is our custom which is good.' . . . And so we, now, we have our Church and our fathers come in with us. It is our aim to take the old people with us, not ourselves to go forward alone. All the other customs which the missionaries brought to us we think are good, only this European custom of marriage is difficult.

Nyasuro and Ngemela had both been suspended from the Church of Scotland Mission for marrying second wives, and Nyasuro, a man of fifty-three, had four wives when we knew him. He kindly provided us with a copy of a statement on the beliefs and constitution of the African National Church, which is worth quoting in full:

St Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FNU? Ngwade FNU?
Nyakyusa

May they all go away.

Our Church is calling everyone to come in so that the house of marriage may be filled. It is Thy work to give them all new dresses.

May they all go away.

We are taking here as wild animals; we forget worship which is our life. Teach us to drink here moderately, Father.

May they all go away.

We have forgotten all the laws You gave to our forefathers. We have married women by snatching. Turn us to a life of new marriages according to the ways of our forefathers, Father.

May they all go away.

Father, Son and Holy Ghost, One God, ever and ever. Do unto us according to what we have said. Amen, amen, amen.

In spite of the assertion in the constitution that the rules of faith are based on the first five books of the Bible, a sermon we heard was based on New Testament parables; candidates at baptism must give their assent to Aganitse' creed; and the doctrine of the resurrection is preached at funerals, John xi. 23-6, and Job xix. 23-5, being read.

The African National Church has five schools at which half the fees charged in corresponding classes in mission schools are levied, but not all of them succeed in keeping their pupils. In 1937 there was a 'strike' by African National Church parents against sending their children to one school because 'the children of the leaders in this area are attending the Livingstonia schools and some goes to their own National Schools'.

The members of Ngwade's Church were less sophisticated than those of the African National Church and we heard of no written constitution. The services were also simpler. The only sermon we heard was on repentance.

Repent and repent anew; do not delay! Repent in your hearts! There is no virtue in baptism; it is just water; but let your hearts be washed clean. The world is full of things which excite wonder and envy. Many when they see the riches of their fellow say to themselves: 'I will go and steal his things', but we must not do that. Many go and commit adultery in the long grass, but we must not do that. God has sent us the Gospel. These are the words of Christ and none other are his words (holding up the New Testament). Our Fathers had never heard of it, but we have, and Christ calls us to repent. In the old days when a

* Referring, Nyamwa said, to the views of polygamists. Many women in Ngwade objected to polygyny on the ground that where there were several wives they were not properly clothed.

9: Wilson Z-5 (2934-2955) 1959
F3017 Ngondo F3017
Nyakyusa

stranger came through the country our fathers lay in wait for him and killed him, but we are learning and have to learn to give him food and a night's shelter. Request and let your hearts be washed!

We differ from other Christians because we baptize in Jordan, and they baptize in a dish in the church. They say we are wrong, but we say we do what Christ told us to do. They also say we are wrong to marry more than one wife. The words we say are just the same as the words of those at Kalambo (i.e. Lutherans) with two differences, that of baptism and that of having more than one wife.

Communion services are celebrated half-yearly at each of several different centres by the leaders of the 'independent' Churches, and since they are unable to obtain wine, sweet tea or a light beer are used instead.

The members of Ngwesla's Church contribute to buy a bull and rice and beer, and share a feast together after a communion service, and it is alleged by outsiders, though stoutly denied by members, that these are 'love feasts' at which members exchange wives,[1] to show that they are 'one body'. The African National Church also holds feasts after services and some outsiders say these too are 'love feasts', but outside opinion on the African National Church's feasts was much less unanimous than about Ngwesla's feasts. It is certain that in Ngwesla's church men and women drink sitting together in a manner not conventional among the Nyakyusa. Members of the mission Churches spoke of members of the independent Churches as living 'just like pagans' and averred that, despite their polygyny, their members ran off with other men's wives and were scarcely disciplined for doing so.

It is also clear that the would-be members are baptized almost immediately, with no period of testing and instruction such as is insisted upon by the mission Churches; that very many of them are members who have been suspended by other Churches; and that the 'pastors' have no special training for their task.

Nyasuru's church attracted more educated people than did Ngwesla's and, in terms of Dr. Sundkler's classification,[2] his was a typical Ethiopian Church with its emphasis on African nationalism. Ngwesla, the son of a minor chief, behaved much like a chief and attracted the less educated. He emphasized 'washing' —baptism by immersion—and repentance, and he was peripatetic

[1] This is also alleged of the Watch Tower in Northern Rhodesia, cf. Ian Cunnison, 'A Watch Tower Assembly in Central Africa', *International Review of Missions*, 48 (1959), p. 482.

[2] B. G. M. Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets*, Lutterworth Press (1948), pp. 296-8.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1939
F3617 Ngonde F3617
Nyakyusa

like most of the leaders of Zionist Churches in the south.[1] 797[A]

It is noticeable that the two 'independent' Churches have a more elaborate form of service than the Church from which their leaders have sprung, and Ngemela habitually wears conspicuous vestments. There is, of course, great variation between different denominations in the emphasis placed on ritual, some Protestants abjuring it and turning their very insistence on starkness and simplicity into a ritual in itself—a taboo. There seems to be a clear tendency in Southern Africa for 'independent' Churches to express themselves more and more in ritual and less in dogma. In this way they reduce the gap between themselves and the pagans, for the pagan religion is expressed almostly exclusively in ritual, whereas Christianity is expressed in creeds and confessions as well as in the rituals of the Church.

795[B] 779 [796]

(e) THE CONTRAST BETWEEN PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN

There are certain common elements in the rituals celebrated by pagans and Christians: some of the occasions are the same, and in the conceptions of sacrifice, of death and rebirth, of confession and cleansing, there are similarities; but there are also profound differences. The conception of life, immortality, replaces the preoccupation with fertility, for though most Nyakyusa Christians, like the pagans, regard celibacy as evidence of physical abnormality, and the conventional desire of a woman is to have six children—a quiverful in Nyakyusa eyes—yet fertility is no longer the end of all being, sought in every ritual. There are profound differences, too, in the values expressed in the rituals regarding sex relations, the range of moral obligations, and social change. In pagan thought polygyny is good—a man should have many children. Child marriage is defended on the ground that a girl 'gets accustomed to her husband' if she goes to him early, and homosexual relations between youths and young men are tolerated since they have no wives and *cannot* marry if the older men are polygynists. What is upheld is the chastity of women, and a total separation of the sex activities of members of successive generations, expressed in the taboos limiting familiarity between mother and son, father and nubile daughter, father-in-law and daughter-law. In Christian thought it is the 'pure in heart' who 'see God' and this is interpreted by the mission Churches to imply monogamy. Only in the 'independent' African Churches is it asserted

797[A] 795[B]

[842] [589] [595] [584] [838] [836] [561] [183] [595]

[1] The emphasis on healing, so common in the south, is absent.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

that polygyny is compatible with Christianity, and indeed sanctioned by the example of many of the heroes of the Old Testament. It is here that the cleavage between pagan and Christian ways of life is felt to be greatest: the desire to marry or inherit a second wife is the main reason for many men leaving the mission Churches. The traditional way for the well-to-do man to expend his capital and maintain his position was to marry again and the wealth of the lineage was concentrated in the senior line through the rule of inheritance of widows.

Again and again in sermons Nyakyusa preachers came back to the problem of polygyny. 'Let not those who know not the law deceive you saying, "You, Christian, what is one poor little wife? (*ibilibali bimo kyene*) See, do not your children also die (like those of pagans) and constantly fall ill? Take a second wife." Perhaps the BaNgemela tell you that God also favours that. If you agree you are uprooted. What, after all, is a second wife? In Jesus there is life.' (2 Peter iii. 17.)

Young men are also caught in a contradiction of values when their fathers have betrothed them while still quite young.

It is very difficult for a man to refuse a girl whom his father has engaged for him. To a pagan man it does not matter very much because, provided he has cattle, he can always marry a girl of his own choice as well, but a Christian cannot. Such was the case of a friend of ours, A, a Christian teacher. When he was a child, before he was baptized, his father, a senior village headman and a powerful and wealthy man, engaged for him B, a little girl who could barely walk. A got on well at school and when he was growing up the missionary said to him: 'When you marry choose a girl of some education, because it is good for an educated man to marry an educated girl.' A fell in love with C, a Christian, who had learnt to read and write, and sew and launder, and who consequently was one of the best-educated girls in the district. They came to an understanding together, our informant being the 'go-between'. A went to the elders of the congregation and told them he wished to marry C. They replied: 'We, on our part agree; go and ask your father.' Then A's father said: 'Well, no, B is your wife (though she was still a child and the marriage had not been consummated), but you are my eldest son, I have many cattle, I agree to arrange marriages with them both for you at once.' So A thought and thought and went back to the elders and told them saying: 'My father refuses, he won't hear of it unless I marry

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1935) 1939
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some copy, the manners of Europeans towards their wives, but neither husband nor wife is quite sure what the change in manners implies, and both are often inconsistent in their behaviour. As an educated Nyakyusa put it: 'They do not know what to expect from each other.'

Marriage relationships are complicated by the disproportion in the numbers of men and women; a disproportion which continues while the rule of monogamy is preached and accepted by many. The first effect of the increase in wealth in Rungwe district was for the marriage age of women to go down; in Mr. Punch's phrase 'too many cattle were chasing too few wives'; but the combined pressure of missions and Administration, and some acquaintance with the customs of the outside world, has reversed that tendency, and the marriage of girls before puberty, which was general among pagans in 1938, now appears to be exceptional. Many girls are still betrothed before puberty, but they do not go to their husbands until after that time, and so be still single at puberty with no betrothed to play his part in the ritual is no longer embarrassing to a girl, for the puberty ritual is not celebrated in full. The ruling of the District Council that a man may not recover more than one cow given for a girl who has not reached puberty, if the marriage is dissolved, discourages men from giving cattle for girls who have not grown up. At the same time the marriage age of men is going down. Marriage in the early twenties or even the late teens is common now, for young men who have been to work on the mines can buy marriage cattle for themselves, and Christians who are well-to-do provide for the marriages of young men instead of taking additional wives. Therefore the gap in the marriage age of men and women is very considerably diminished, but it still exists, and combined with the disproportion in the total number of males and females it means that a considerable proportion of the women (perhaps 30 per cent)[1] must become the junior wives of polygynists or remain unmarried altogether, or live alone as widows.

Among pagans polygyny is approved, but young men are irked by their responsibility for elderly widows, a responsibility that was formerly accepted as a matter of course. Able-bodied wives are still economically an asset even now that trade goods are in general use. For Nyakyusa men—pagans—have insisted that as

[1] The masculinity rate is calculated at 87·9 : 100 (*ibid. supra*) and the average difference in the marriage age may well be six years.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1935) 1939
FNI? Nyonde FNI?
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their wives took to wearing cloth they should earn it for themselves by growing and selling millet and brewing beer, and many women do the clearing and hoeing in their fields, work that used to fall to men; but it is difficult for a chief to refuse to provide a man to hoe the ridges in his wife's field, or to refuse an elderly woman a cloth or some salt, and young heirs grumble much about their encumbrances.

In the political field there has been a sustained attempt to make local government more democratic and to include in it the educated men. Between 1891, when the German Government first assumed control of the area, and 1938, the tendency was for the power of the chiefs to be increased at the expense of that of the commoners. This was admitted by the chiefs themselves, as we have seen. In 1939 there was established a system of Rural Councils, on which chiefs, village headmen (*mafumu*), and ordinary commoners are represented. Four[1] of each category are chosen as representatives on the Council in their area by an electoral college itself elected by all taxpayers. Rungwe District is divided into five areas. The policy of treating some chiefs as senior to others has been abandoned and each of the seventy-eight recognized rulers (*abatwe*) is eligible for election as a chief's representative on his local Rural Council. Village headmen (two from each chiefdom) and the ordinary commoners are similarly chosen. The five Rural Councils in turn elect one man of each sort to the District Council.[2] The system allows for, and seems to have achieved, a combination of men with traditionally high status and those who are conspicuous by reason of their education or success as coffee or rice farmers. The old feeling that education was not necessary to a chief's son, though it might be useful to a poor man, has vanished, and a considerable number of the educated leaders of the district are sons or grandsons of chiefs. The elected president of the District Council, Mr. Gordon Mwaisumo (1936) is of the Nyakyusa chiefs' lineage, though not of the most senior line. In the Rural Councils the presidents elected have all, with one exception, been ruling chiefs, but it is not necessarily the genealogically senior who is chosen. There is scope for selection on the grounds of character and ability.

[1] Five in the populous plain, Ntokela (Mo'Ngonde).

[2] *cf.* E. E. Kingdon, 'The Initiation of a System of Local Government by African Rural Councils in Rungwe District of Tanganyika', *Journal of African Administration*, vol. iii, 4 (1951).

9 Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1955
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Nyakyusa

structure? And how far does the new economic and political organization produce a change in religion? These theoretical questions can be answered only by a series of comparative studies. Here there is evidence for one area alone, and the conclusions which we postulate can be established only if they hold in a whole range of societies.

Christianity implies an emergence from the sense of kinship, for the worshipping group is two or three believers, not a body of kinsmen, and conversion is a personal choice. This is more obvious in a missionary church than in one long established, for, as we have seen, the convert in a pagan community must withdraw from his kinsfolk to become a Christian,[1] but it remains true, even in a Christian society. The new doctrine implies a body of believers—a Church. The particular form varies, but the Church has appeared wherever the Christian faith has been established. In short, we argue that the change in religion necessarily disrupts an organization based primarily on kinship and establishes a new type of organization based partly on voluntary association. With the change from the ritual of the lineage to the ritual of the Church the authority and leadership of senior kinsmen is diminished; they are replaced by 'elders' and priests or pastors whose basis of authority is not birth, but selection by the Church. Furthermore, association for worship becomes a pattern for association in other fields, and the Church is the training ground among the Nyakyusa, as it has been among so many other peoples, for organizations of other types of association.

And not only is kinship subordinated to faith; the forms of kinship are themselves modified. From the time of their first arrival the missionaries have taught that Christianity implies monogamy and they have baptized no polygynist who does not put away his additional wives. This teaching has been questioned by many Africans and by some European missionaries themselves, who doubt the wisdom of persuading a man already married to send away his wives—or even of countenancing such an action. But the rule of monogamy has remained as a condition of membership in all the Churches with European connexions.[2] It has been rejected, as we have seen, by two of the 'independent' African

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 139-9.

[2] The rule was suspended for a brief period in one mission working not far from the Nyakyusa area, but was later enforced. cf. Lyndon Harries in *Survey of African Marriage and Family Life* (edited by A. Phillips), pp. 341-2.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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Churches in the area. Nevertheless the bulk of professing Christians are monogamists, though it is still customary and, in Rungwe District, economically profitable, for a rich man who is not a Christian to have more than one wife. The difficulties of establishing monogamy are accentuated by the great disproportion in the numbers of men and women. If the figures available are accurate, a general acceptance of monogamy would mean that only about 70 per cent of the women could be married; therefore the Church is necessarily concerned in seeking an adjustment in the disproportion of the population—in keeping the men alive if our assumption that the shortage of men is due to a heavy male death rate is true.

The yeast of the gospel permeates still further. It is taken to imply the freedom of an individual to accept or reject a partner in marriage. This has been maintained from the first in the Nyakyusa Church, and is enforced by the courts, which apply a conception of personal rights springing from the Christian tradition.

Most Nyakyusa men attribute the rapid rise in the divorce rate to this new "freedom" of women. Christian teaching stresses the family and the sanctity of marriage, but it ignores the lineage. In the traditional rituals of kinship the lineage is represented again and again, while in Christian ritual it is the elementary family and the Church that are pictured. The preoccupation with fertility and the reproductive cycle was linked with the glorification of the lineage itself, and it disappears when the lineage ceases to be the basis of social grouping.

How closely linked are symbols to other aspects of a society? Our hypothesis is that they are relatively free, but it can be shown that many of the symbols used in the traditional rituals of the Nyakyusa reflect the economy, and vary somewhat from one area to another, with the staple crops. The development of trade or of new crops is a prerequisite for using the symbols of bread and wine traditional in the Christian rituals, and even the 'independent' African Churches use new foods, not the beer and bananas of the country; thus change in material symbols and change in economy may be directly connected. The imagery changes also with the changing social structure; Kyala ceases to be pictured as a senior kinsman, when the lineage organization begins to weaken; he is God the father of a family rather than an early member of the royal lineage. But there is no evidence that

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land on hire. Young men compete with one another, with their elder brothers and with their fathers for allocations of land left vacant. We also saw, however, that often in the larger families not all the sons are able to get a share of the paternal holding, or at least not a share of practicable size. These younger sons are forced to resort to trying to obtain vacant land elsewhere - possibly within the same village, but as often as not outside. Finally, the young man on his new holding may find his neighbours to be of any age; certainly they will not have been members of his own original corral-hamlet.

The way for this changing concept of village life and the new sort of village was prepared in the years before land shortage became important. The changed political system has been briefly noted already, but no less important was the great increase in inter-village movements in earlier European days when peace and personal security had been established. During this period Wilson (1936, page 32) reckoned that perhaps 80 per cent. of Nyakyusa shifted at least once from the place where they first obtained fields. This estimate, whilst perhaps holding good for Highland Nyakyusa amongst whom Wilson mainly worked, was too high for the people of the Lake Plains, where about 40 per cent. is more correct according to my genealogical and village surveys. That is still a relatively high degree of mobility for a mainly subsistence, peasant society such as it was in those years. It is clear that the pseudo-fraternal bond of comradeship could not persist as a main element of village life and consciousness, when in fact as many as half of the members of a village were not original corral founders but had come in from elsewhere. Before the land shortage, movements did not entail the shifting of young men to other young men's villages, or of elder men to other elder men's villages. It was, at least eventually, promiscuous movements, ignoring age-categories. The compulsions of land shortage were, in retrospect, only to have followed existing lines of village development and to have begun the completion of the process.

In the Lake Plains, therefore, the village persists as a close, territorial, land-owning group and as a specific cluster of homesteads and huts, usually with a village street, the whole closely hemmed in by continuous banana groves. Beyond this lie the arable lands, usually food-crop fields nearby and paddy fields further off. In jealously protecting what is already built, the village has gained a new exclusiveness, for the security of the individual land-holder is maintained by the corporate ownership of the village and by excluding outsiders as far as possible. On the other hand, it is no longer an age-village either in fact or intention, and it cannot be, for age-villages were consistent only with an expanding territorial system and a subsistence economy.

This brief analysis of Nyakyusa village organization in recent times applies only to the Lake Plains. In some parts of both the Central Region and the Northern Highlands the age-basis of Nyakyusa villages had most probably already been seriously weakened in pre-European times.[1] On the other hand, elsewhere, and particularly in the more conservative parts less affected by modern trends and the cash economy, the traditional age-village still exists in something like its old form.

Land shortage has appeared in the Highlands together with a developing cash economy, but the basis of agricultural and economic change lies mainly in coffee cultivation which, of course, requires relatively smaller fields than does paddy in the Lake Plains, but it needs more care and attention from the grower for moderate returns. As far as I could see in the course of

1. Perhaps it will be more accurate to say that the Highland Nyakyusa never had age-villages in the sense that the Lake Nyakyusa did.

2. According to other information in Western Kabwe, Mwakaleli and some coastal chiefdoms, and also the evidence of old village sites.

U: Bingaard E-5 (1955) 1961 FNIT Ngumbo FNIT
Nyakyusa
Haya Fnit

H 392 As indicated above, the floor is covered with grass. Various domestic utensils may be seen, stuck into this screen of plant material.

H 392 178 But this old, beautiful type of hut is very much on the decline. It is costly to make and so long in repair, and the thick straw roof is, admittedly, highly inflammable. A flying trip round Lake Victoria clearly shows how the straw roofs in the Sukuma groves are being replaced by corrugated iron. This change may even have another reason, viz. the fact that fodder for cattle is to short supply and that the grass for roofs is hard to come by. No doubt, it is a question of time when the fine old Haya hut will have disappeared.

N 114 In the Southern Highlands, where I was given the opportunity to stay for three months at various Danish mission stations, I visited the village round the Rungwe mission, the neighbouring villages of Ilolo and Kikoti, and some villages near the Konnegunio mission station. I made a trip to Lake Nyasa and another to the Poroto mountains. I must admit to a limited knowledge of dressing technique and of house construction, but I have measured a number of houses and sketched their plan and also the furnishings I found in them. The positioning of the various objects has been established.

N 341 [342] 350 The high standard of dwellings of the Nyanyakyusa is truly to be wondered at. The houses, clustered to villages, often along a winding street, lie intermingled with banana and coffee bushes. The houses are large and their interior is clean. Often two or three houses belong to one family, and, if so, will be grouped round a courtyard.

N 342 [324] Even if you could find houses built from sun-dried bricks and fired tiles, most were from bamboo with a grass roofing.

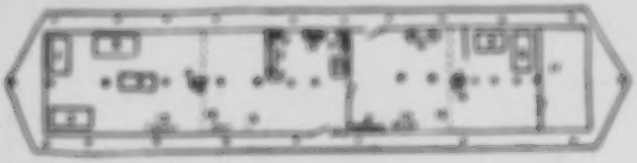
All houses stand on a clay base which, though not very high, no doubt means some protection against penetration of ground moisture during the heavy rains of April-June.

N [324] Besides bamboo, sometimes the bole of tree fern, *cuticle*, is used in outer walls. Such tree fern stems have not the carrying capacity of bamboo, but they are far more resistant to rot. Among the other common features of the existing types of houses, should be mentioned the mud cloth, the dado of rolls that from the inside are pressed between the vertical bamboo poles; also, the inner wall is roughcast with a mixture of mud and cow manure; the floor is from tamped clay. In some places you find very fine floors in which a pattern has been rolled into the wet clay; to this end a short length of the stem of the banana cluster has been employed, viz. the length between the seats of the male and the female flowers. Also employed are another plant stem, or an empty corn cob.

N [287] [531] In all houses where women live, there are one or more hearths. The presence of two hearths in one house usually means that the husband has two wives, each with having her own hearth, either in the common house or in a house of her own.

N 359 ● 515 N 342 The houses always have a kind of ceiling made from bamboo sticks and carried

SI: Diagaard E-5 (1933) 1962 3'967 Digonda 3'967
Nyakyusa



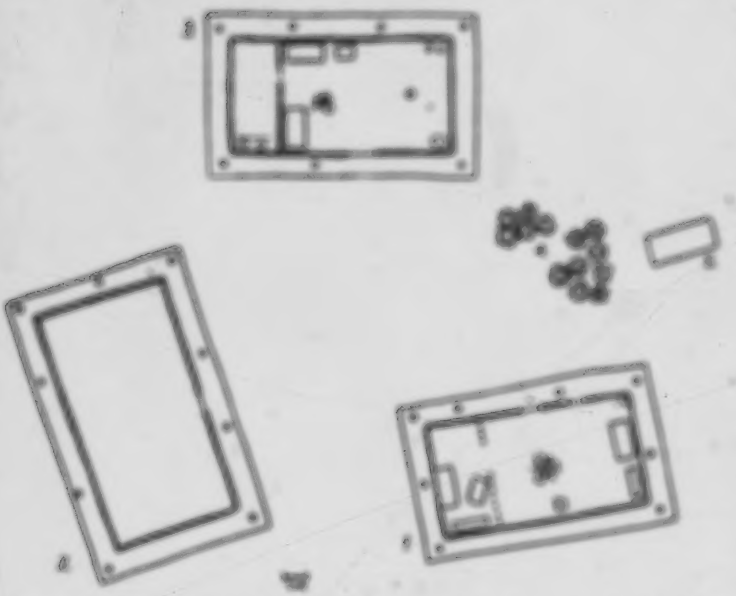
An oblique to the village of Kiwanjala, the district of Kyimpinda, belonging to a man with two wives. The rooms have hamitoo ceilings from domed floor to ridge-pole. Rooms reaching to ridge of roof are filled in: 1, husband's bed; 2, wife's bed; 3, child's bed; 4, hearth; 5, bowl-stand; 6, water jar; 7, mat; 8, ladder; 9, table; 10, stools; 11, store-room; 12, domed floor above footpaths of village; 13, small objects; 14, cooking material; 15, sleeping mat.

huts. On page 353, he reports how the boys, when 7 or 10 years old, will leave their parents' house to live in long, rectangular cowhouse-like houses big or small, in a special youngsters' quarters at the far end of the village. On page 358 he writes: In many cases you do not know for certain whether you are dealing with a youngsters' house or a cowhouse—for the cattle may well be kept in these houses—or the herdsmen may sleep in the cowhouses. However, this mostly holds true of the low-lying Konde country, while on the other hand, in the high country, the cattle is usually kept in the dwelling houses. On pages 371 and 372, he informs how the cattle is tied to posts at night, and he shows a picture of a cowhouse.

He also refers (on page 378) to the use of the rectangular house for married men besides the boys. The difference is seen in the fact that these houses are not roughcast with mud, as this work is the province of women. Finally, he reports that, during the last few years of his stay in the Konde country, he saw Konde houses being built under increasing influence of the coastal culture, in imitation of the Swahili houses. They were roughcast with mud inside and out, and had a verandah supported by posts.

In 1933, many dakaga could be seen. Some were for the cattle, but most were dwelling houses for married people. (Boys aged 7–10 and upwards until the marriageable age lived in ramshackle boys' houses, the material of which was not bamboo, but a thinner grass, resembling bamboo very much. These houses stood

U: Stegsvold E-5 (1955) 1962 FNUT Sigvalds FNUT
Bjarkeyene



Three houses belonging to one family, situated around a common courtyard; the doors open on to the yard. The village street is along the back of the house at top. a, farmer's house; b, Rafn's house; g, Hávi's house; g, farmers' plants; g, farmyard.

houses existed which were six metres in length. It had the same width as Hávi's house, approximately 3 metres. The roof was supported by posts along the sides and at the gables.

Two women lived in this house, both married to the same man. Consequently, there were two hearths, the stones of which were cylindrical-conical, broadening slightly at the top. All were decorated. Each woman had her part of the house, both with an outer door, and further there was a door, slightly narrower, between the two parts, and a fourth door to a store-room. No less than twelve posts supported the roof, all reaching to the ridge. The two parts were a bit unequal in size; nearly half of each had the well-known loft for firewood, etc. One part contained beds for the woman and her husband (one bed had two screw seats). The children had two beds. The husband had still another house, a short distance away at the foot of a hill, they said. I did not see it. The other woman's room held her bed and a cot.

The hearths of both rooms were placed in the centre, between two upright posts. Utensils and furnishings did not differ much from the usual: hen's eggs,

19: Lehmann E-5 (1939)1951 F367 Ngonde F367
Nyakyusa

he had received the object from his ancestors and it must always hang on this spot, as the ancestral spirits (*vinyanka*)[1] themselves controlled its presence. It consisted of an ox-scrotum, i. e. the tail of an ox, but the upper part of it was hollow. In this hollow part medicines (*imyeta*)[2] were kept. Yet another magical medicine, in the shape of a piece of bark of the tree called *Erythrophloeum Guineense*[3] was fastened on the upper end of this sign. When my European attendant immediately said to the chief: "And from this piece you make your sword"[4], the chief exclaimed in astonishment: "*Unene wene Kyaro!*" (You are sons of Kyaro! i. e. You Europeans know everything.)

After this there was no more delay in revealing to us some more features of this sign of dignity. According to the belief of his fathers this object possessed a special *amaka* (power)[5], e. g. to defeat enemies, if the chief were to hold it directly against them. Also if a thief were to try to enter the room by force, by making a hole beneath the wall of this part of the hut, he would be stricken by power coming from the *vinyanga* and it would have the impression that eyes are directed against him, and so be driven away.

After these interesting communications I went to visit the hut of one of his wives, which still revealed the *inyanga*, the old-fashioned round structure of bamboo poles diverging from their upper end and thatched with grass[6].

9. The frequent walks in company with the chief or some of his *amalumo* gave me several opportunities for enquiries. On one occasion,

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[1] Cf. Wilson, Burial, p. 9: *wenyuka* (Sing.); Mackenzie, p. 191: *banyuka* (Kaonga).

[2] Cf. Mackenzie, p. 275: *ibagwa* (Kaonga).

[3] The pharmacological substance of the bark (Cortex Erythrophloei, „Sasse-bark") is the alcaloid Erythrophlein which produces the same typical effects on the heart as the Digitalis-group (cf. *C. G. Santesson:* Pfeilgiftstudien XII. Arkiv för Botanik 27 A, No. 4, Stockholm 1935, p. 6).

[4] Cf. Wilson, Land Rights, p. 32; *Merensky*, p. 134; *Fülleborn*, p. 369.

[5] *amaka* is not a specific expression for „magical" or (religious) „supernatural" power, although, from the European standpoint this meaning may be connected with the word in specific cases, but generally it means any striking impression or effect of a quality of a person or object, e. g. *upiki aki ngalimo amaka*, in this wood is power. This word is, therefore, a parallel to the Austronesian, especially Polynesian word *mana*, examined in my treatise „Mana. The term of that what is exceedingly striking". Staatliches Forschungsinstitut für Völkerkunde. I. Reihe. Ethnographie. Vol. 3. Leipzig 1933. If the Nyakyusa wishes to say that a phenomenon is "supernatural", then he connects it with Kyaro, or he names it directly "Kiaro" (cf. *Merensky*, p. 110 [191, 218]).

[6] Cf. *Fülleborn*, p. 377, fig. 140: Schematical average of a round-hut (as also to be found with the Nyakyusa still today).